Vacancies in Supreme Court

*216. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Supreme Court Judges who have either retired or are due to retire this year;

(b) whether Government have completed its exercise to fill up the resultant vacancies expeditiously;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when the appointments are likely to be finalized?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (d) Since January, 2005, 2 Judges of the Supreme Court have retired. During the remaining period of the year i.e. upto December, 2005, 4 more Judges of the Supreme Court will be retiring on attaining the age of superannuation.

2. After the Supreme Court Judgement of October 6, 1993 in the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record & Anr. *Vs.* Union of India, read with their Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998, the entire process of initiation of proposal for appointment of a Judge of a Supreme Court lies with the Chief Justice of India.

3. Government has not received any proposal, so far, from the Chief Justice of India for appointment of Judges in the vacancies already available in the Supreme Court or those which will be falling vacant till December, 2005.

Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for Hearing Handicapped

*217. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the academic courses offered at the Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for Hearing Handicapped in Mumbai;

(b) whether any review has been done keeping in view the need to expand the number of courses offered by the institute;

(c) if so, the details thereof;